



STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
1 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

Paul R. LePage
GOVERNOR

14 April 2012

The 125th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, ME

Dear Honorable Members of the 125th Legislature:

Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2-A of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby executing line-item vetoes of a number of allocations contained within LD 1903, "An Act To Make Additional Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations and To Change Certain Provisions of the Law for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2012 and June 30, 2013." These vetoes are included on the attached sheet.

General Assistance is a welfare program that, like most others, has gotten out of control. The amounts vetoed will put this issue back on the table and the Legislature must summon the political courage to fix the program structurally. Hiding from our problems will not make them go away. The Maine people expect leadership and those in Augusta must deliver.

The other vetoes speak for themselves. But real change is needed in the way we do business. We can no longer ignore the problems, we cannot pass the buck, and we cannot kick the can any further down the road. It is time to choose between the entitlement state and the American dream. These vetoes show you where I stand.

We need a profile in courage in Augusta. We must do what is right, without regards to the next election. It is why we all took that solemn oath and that is why I ask each and every one of you for your support on these vetoes. It is, quite frankly, the right thing to do. We can do no other.

Sincerely,

Paul R. LePage
Governor



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LD 1903 - Line Item Vetoes

Section A-17.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF (FORMERLY DHS)

General Assistance - Reimbursement to Cities and Towns 0130

Initiative: Provides funding for general assistance benefits.

GENERAL FUND	2011-12	2012-13	VETO
All Other	\$3,991,196	\$4,297,699	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$3,991,196</u>	<u>\$4,297,699</u>	<u>\$0</u>

Reason: Lasting structural changes to Maine's General Assistance Welfare Program are necessary to make the program affordable and sustainable. The funding included in this line item puts off the necessary decisions to restructure the program and papers over the problem, while leaving a \$2.3 million hole in FY13. This approach is irresponsible and does not serve Maine people - it is time for bold action and real change.

LD 1903 - Line Item Vetoes

Section A-17.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF (FORMERLY DHS)
General Assistance - Reimbursement to Cities and Towns 0130

Initiative: Provides funding in the General Assistance - Reimbursement to Cities and Towns program to bring allocations into line with anticipated resources.

GENERAL FUND	2011-12	2012-13	VETO
All Other	\$0	\$449,846	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$449,846</u>	<u>\$0</u>

Reason: Lasting structural changes to Maine's General Assistance Welfare Program are necessary to make the program affordable and sustainable. The funding included in this line item puts off the necessary decisions to restructure the program and papers over the problem, while leaving a \$2.3 million hole in FY13. This approach is irresponsible and does not serve Maine people - it is time for bold action and real change.

LD 1903 - Line Item Vetoes

Section A-17.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF (FORMERLY DHS) General Assistance - Reimbursement to Cities and Towns 0130

Initiative: Allocates funds for 7 limited-period Family Independence Specialist positions in the general assistance program and for other costs of the pilot program to maximize and expedite the award of federal Supplemental Security Income program benefits for recipients of general assistance and to identify and assist veterans who receive assistance through programs administered by the Office for Family Independence who may be eligible for federal Department of Veterans Affairs cash or medical assistance to access those benefits. These positions are established through June 15, 2014. This initiative is estimated to generate \$1,057,903 in 2012-13 in additional dedicated revenue for the general assistance program. Any dedicated revenue in addition to this estimated level must be used to offset the savings target of the general assistance working group established in this Act.

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	2011-12	2012-13	VETO
Personal Services	\$0	\$469,104	\$0
All Other	\$0	\$976,874	\$0
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$1,445,978</u>	<u>\$0</u>

Reason: This proposal anticipates reducing costs in our General Assistance Welfare Program by shifting people to a different welfare program. That is not welfare reform - it is simply box shifting. I do not believe that the solution to Maine's high welfare costs is to send the bill to Washington, DC. We must promote self sufficiency for Mainers and the State alike, not more reliance on the Federal Government.

LD 1903 - Line Item Vetoes

Section AAA-3.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF (FORMERLY BDS) Riverview Psychiatric Center 0105

Initiative: Provides funding to offset a reduction in disproportionate share payments for individuals transferred from jails or prisons, for individuals for whom the court has ordered evaluations and for individuals determined to be incompetent to stand trial.

GENERAL FUND	2011-12	2012-13	VETO
Unallocated	\$0	\$3,176,972	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$3,176,972</u>	<u>\$0</u>

Reason: The way Maine funds mental health treatment for prisoners and those found not criminally responsible likely violates federal law. My budget proposed ending this questionable practice. The approach adopted by the Appropriations Committee leaves Maine taxpayers at risk of owing millions of dollars to the federal government. That risk must and can be avoided.